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# ENST 420.50: U.S. Environmental Movement - Past, Present, and Future

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## ENST 420: U.S. Environmental Movement: Past, Present, and Future

Spring, 2013

Instructor: Jacob Cowgill

Class Dates & Location: The online course runs from January 28 to May 17. It is taught online, (<http://umonline.umt.edu/>).

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Virtual Office Hours: By appointment

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**\*This syllabus and all course documents are subject to change\***

**Course Overview:** This course addresses the history of the US environmental movement through the examination of politics, culture, and society. This course will provide students with an understanding of how individuals and groups have shaped and influenced history. This course traces the movement from its philosophical foundations through the colonial, frontier, and industrial eras, and through the conservation movement and recent history of the past two decades. We examine the role, agenda, and effectiveness of various conservation groups and approaches. The essential question of this course is: How have groups and individuals changed the way we think about and interact with Nature?

As an online course, this may be very different from what you are used to in a traditional classroom setting. Working online allows for a degree of self-paced learning, independence and scheduling flexibility. It is also highly interactive and requires a high degree of active participation. As I will not be giving lectures, your learning will come, in large part, from your interaction with the course materials and fellow students.

**Course Importance and Relevance:** Having a full understanding of the history, background, and debates within the conservation movement will guide future conservation leaders in crafting effective environmental organizations, coalitions, and campaigns. In examining both the successes and failures of the movement will aid students in charting future directions, avoiding potential pitfalls, and becoming more effective advocates for social change.

**Course Objectives:** Students will gain an understanding of the way in which individuals and groups heavily influence events, ideas, and attitudes; the way in which social movements have profound and lasting changes; the importance of ideas and attitudes in shaping conservation outcomes; the importance of rhetoric and discourse in shaping debates; and the shifting meaning of conservation in larger social context.

### Expected Student Learning Outcomes:

Learning Outcomes:	Assessments:
Understanding the spectrum of environmental organizations	Research Project
Active engagement with course materials, other students, and instructor	Participation/Discussion
Development of critical thinking skills and analysis of subject material	Reading Responses
Extracurricular engagement	Assignments

### Course Requirements

#### Announcements:

Check the **Announcements** for each week in the center column. It will be the place for any general information I need to pass along to you.

#### Participation/Discussion:

Active weekly participation in the online **Forum** is required and vital to a successful online course. I will be posting discussion questions each week and you should anticipate logging on at least 3 times or more to read and post responses. These discussion questions serve as our "in-class" discussion, so in addition to posting a response to the questions, you need to freely engage with other students in the discussion forum by replying to their responses. There is no required number of replies, but active participation is a must. Posting a response to a question the last few days the question is open online doesn't allow proper time for classmates to engage in a discussion by replying and will be graded accordingly. **For our purposes a week begins on Monday and runs to Sunday evening.** Discussion questions will remain up for no more than 2 weeks. This should provide flexibility and ample time to post. All of your posts should be well composed with correct punctuation, spelling, etc. Please refrain from "texting" style. Every three weeks or so you will receive an assessment of your contribution to the discussion.

#### Reading Responses:

For 3 of the 14 weeks of the semester, you need to write a short (500-700 words) response to any of the previous reading assignments. (Guidelines for Reading Responses can be found under **Resources** in the upper left-hand or in the center column under **Course Documents**.)

**Assignments:** You will have 5 short (500-700 word) assignments throughout the semester. These assignments range from attending lectures, events, volunteering, civic engagement, etc. Opportunities will be posted each week, but you are not limited to these. (Guidelines for Assignments can be found under **Resources** in the upper left-hand or in the center column under **Course Documents**.)

**Assignments and Reading Response Guidelines:** Please submit assignments and reading responses through email by attaching a Word or equivalent document using the title, underscore, and your last name as the document name. For example: Assignment1\_Cowgill. Double-space the text of your paper, use 12 point Times New Roman font, set the margins on your paper to 1 inch on all sides, indent the first line of paragraphs one half-inch from the left margin (usually one Tab key worth). In the upper left-hand corner of the first page, list your name, instructor's name, the assignment or reading response number, and the date. Create a header in the upper right-hand corner that includes your last name, followed by a space with a page number; number all pages consecutively with Arabic numerals (1, 2, 3, 4, etc.). Omit the last name/page number header on your first page.

**Late Assignments and Reading Responses:** I will accept late assignments and reading responses up to one week after the due date. One point will be deducted for each day it is late. After one week late, I can no longer accept assignments and reading responses.

**Research Project:** Investigate a particular environmental group, through existing literature, news reports, and personal interviews. Assess the organization's role in the environmental movement, its strategies, goals, accomplishments, challenges, effectiveness, etc. This project will be presented in two forms, a formal research paper and a group presentation. (Guidelines for the Research Project will be found later in the semester under **Resources** in the upper left-hand or in the center column under **Course Documents**.)

**Graduate Increment:** Graduate students taking the course are required to do the following additional work to receive graduate credit (deadlines will be determined):

1. Read *The Enduring Wilderness* by Doug Scott and write a 1000 word plus response that compares that reading with the chapters read from *Wilderness and the American Mind* and reflects on the history of advocacy for wilderness and its recent trends.
2. Read *A Fierce Green Fire* by Phillip Shabecoff and develop a PowerPoint reviewing the major points of chapter 10, 11, 12, 13, or 14 of the book (choose one chapter). The PowerPoint should have notes provided in that utility of the software.

**Course Schedule:**

Week of:	Topic:	Readings/Resources:	Assignment/Assessments:
Jan. 28	Philosophical Foundations	TBA*	
Feb. 4	Native Americans and Colonialism	TBA	
Feb. 11	The Settling of the Frontier	TBA	
Feb. 18	Industrialism: A Nation Grows	TBA	Assignment #1 due (due Tuesday the 19th).
Feb. 25	The Beginning of the Conservation Movement	TBA	First reading response due.
Mar. 4	The Conservation Movement	TBA	

	Continued		
Mar. 11	Rachel Carson's Silent Spring	Carson: cha. 1-7	Assignment #2 due.
Mar. 18	Rachel Carson's Silent Spring cont.	Carson: cha. 8-12	
Mar. 25	Rachel Carson's Silent Spring cont.	Carson: cha. 13-17	Assignment # 3 due. Research proposal due (due Friday Mar. 29).
Apr. 1	The Maturing of the Conservation Movement	TBA	
Apr. 8	Backlash in the 1980s	TBA	Second reading response due.
Apr. 15	The 1990s	TBA	Assignment #4 due.
Apr. 22	Post 9/11 and the Death of Environmentalism	TBA	Assignment # 5 due.
Apr. 29	The Future	TBA	Research project due.
May 6	Student presentations		Research presentation due.
May. 13	Student presentations		Third reading response due.

Assignments/Assessments	Total Possible Points	Due Date
Assignment #1	20	Feb. 19
First reading response	20	Feb. 25
Assignment #2	20	Mar. 11
Assignment # 3	20	Mar. 25
Research proposal due	20	Mar. 29
Second reading response	20	Apr. 8
Assignment # 4	20	Apr. 15
Assignment #5	20	Apr. 22
Research project paper	80	Apr. 29
Research presentation	80	May 6
Third reading response	20	May 13
Presentation engagement	20	Throughout presentations
Discussion participation (10 pts/week)	140	Throughout course

\*To Be Announced

Grading Scale: 500 points possible

500-450 = A

400-449 = B

350-399 = C

300-349 = D

**Course Textbooks/Materials:**

**Texts:** (available at your local bookstore or online).

Rachel Carson, *Silent Spring*, (First Mariner Books, 2002)

**Graduates:**

*The Enduring Wilderness* by Doug Scott

*A Fierce Green Fire* by Phillip Shabecoff

**Online**

TBA

January 28 (Mon).....Classes Begin  
February 18 (Mon).....President's Day, Holiday  
April 1-5 (Mon-Fri).....Spring Vacation  
May 10 (Fri).....Last Regular Class Day  
May 13-17 (Mon-Fri).....Final Examinations